

MONTANA SUPREME COURT ORDER 23-0635 2023 SUPPLEMENTAL/CORRECTED REAL PROPERTY STATEMENT

The Ravalli County Commissioners attempted to reduce local property taxes by levying the 77.9 mills the Department of Revenue calculated as necessary to satisfy the State School Equalization Levy statutory requirement. Governor Gianforte challenged the property tax reduction and the Supreme Court sided with the Governor. Ravalli County is now required to levy the maximum 95 mills instead of the 77.9 mills calculated by the Department of Revenue. The additional 17.1 mills will be billed on the second half tax payment.

This represents an additional 17.1 mills distributed as follows:

- 7.1 mills for State Equalization Aid
- 6.0 mills for County Elementary Equalization
- 4.0 mills for High School Equalization

For further clarification, please contact:

Department of Revenue @ 406-444-6900 or

DORCustomerAssistance@mt.gov or

Governor's Office @ 406-444-3111.

Please remember that Ravalli County and the Ravalli County Treasurer's Office and the local Department of Revenue employees did not play a role in this decision and the work they do is centered on complying with laws passed by the State of Montana.

The Montana Supreme Court determined that the Department of Revenue (DOR) has the authority to direct counties to levy above the current mill levy calculation limitation each year if reserved mills are determined to be available. The DOR has verified that the school equalization mills—under the statutory limitations that adjust mills down when taxable values increase—are reduced from 95 mills to 77.9 mills for this tax year. However, the DOR, under the direction of the Governor's Budget Office and Governor Gianforte, is directing the County to levy extra mills they hold in reserve to generate additional revenue from property taxpayers in Montana. The Supreme Court ordered counties to comply; therefore, your second half taxes will necessarily be increased to comply with the request from the DOR as directed by the Governor and the Order from the Montana Supreme Court.